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SUBJECT: MAY 22 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: SICHUAN EARTHQUAKE, BAN KI-MOON CHINA VISIT, OLYMPIC SECURITY, ZIMBABWE WEAPONS, SOUTH CHINA SEA, IRAN NUCLEAR PROPOSALS, SPACE WEAPONS, OTHER

**¶1. Key points at the May 22 MFA press briefing were:**

-- Only 400,000 of 3.3 million tents needed in the disaster areas of Sichuan have been delivered.

-- Consultations are ongoing for a possible visit to China by Ban Ki-moon.

-- Spokesperson had no information about a potential dirty bomb threat to the Olympics.

-- Reports that Chinese weapons were delivered to Zimbabwe are "groundless and complete fabrications."

-- Spokesperson had no information about reported oil platforms being towed into the South China Sea with navy escorts.

-- China is still considering Iran's nuclear proposals.

-- China has never and will never participate in an "arms race in outer space."

**International Assistance for Earthquake**

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**¶2. At the May 22, 2008 regular MFA press briefing, MFA Spokesman Qin Gang said China is "in urgent need" of tents and shelters for those displaced by the Sichuan earthquake of May 12. Qin said that 3.3 million tents were required, but that only 400,000 have been sent so far. Blankets, clothing, food, medicine and medical and rescue equipment are also needed. Qin also listed total donations so far including 492 million RMB delivered, and 615 million RMB promised through diplomatic channels.**

**Ban Ki-moon Possible Visit to China**

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**¶3. In response to a question about UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon possibly visiting China after his visit to Burma, Qin said that he was not in a position to release information but that "consultations" were ongoing. Qin said that China was very grateful for the expressions of condolences by the UN Security Council and Ban. Qin said that these comments show that the international community stands with the Chinese government and people.**

**No Information on Dirty Bomb Threat**

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**¶4. Asked to respond to comments from an International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) spokesperson regarding the possibility of a "dirty bomb" attack on the Beijing Olympics, Qin said he had no specific information about the threat. Qin also said that China attaches great importance to the safety of those visiting for the Olympics.**

Arms Not Delivered to Zimbabwe

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¶ 15. Responding to a question about China's reported arms shipment to Zimbabwe, Qin said that the military goods "will return to China" and that the An Yue Jiang is currently on its way back to China. Qin called reports to the contrary "groundless and complete fabrications." Pressed on whether China had spoken to the Zimbabwean government about the issue, Qin would only say that "because the reports are groundless, there is nothing to discuss."

Oil Platform in South China Sea

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¶ 16. Asked about reports that a Chinese oil platform had been towed into the South China Sea escorted by Chinese naval vessels, Qin said that he had not heard of related information. Qin went on to say that China has indisputable sovereignty over the South China Sea and its islands. China would like to solve disputes over the sea peacefully.

Iran Nuclear Proposals

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¶ 17. Qin had no response to Iran's nuclear proposal, saying that relevant Chinese authorities were still studying the document. China would like to see the issue resolved diplomatically and all parties should show flexibility, said Qin. China would like to see the talks resume at an early date.

Arms Race in Outer Space

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¶ 18. Asked to respond to recent comments by Army Brigadier General Jeffrey Horne regarding China's efforts to build space weapons, Qin said China "cannot accept such remarks." Qin said that China has never and will never participate in an "arms race in outer space." China supports the peaceful development of space and opposes an arms race in outer space, said Qin. China hopes that U.S. officials will contribute to the mutual trust between the two countries.

Six-Party Talks Positive Momentum

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¶ 19. Qin said he had no information about a date for the next round of Six-Party Talks, but had heard the momentum of the consultations has been "positive." China will continue to communicate and consult with relevant parties to promote the talks.

Lee Myung-bak Visit

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¶ 10. Qin announced that South Korean President Lee Myung-bak will visit China from May 27-30. Lee will meet with Hu Jintao on the afternoon of May 27 and then hold a joint press conference. On May 28, Lee will meet with Wu Bangguo, CPPCC National Committee Chairman Jia Qinglin and Wen Jiabao.

Dalai Lama Olympics Attendance

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¶ 11. Qin said he had heard the Dalai Lama's remarks saying that he would be willing to attend the Beijing Olympics. Qin said, "if the Dalai Lama wants to make contributions to his motherland" he should stop his separatist activities, plotting and provoking violence and disrupting the Olympics. Qin said that the specific time table for the next round of talks is under discussion and noted that China is focused on disaster relief at this time.

China Finance Minister G-8 Invitation

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¶ 12. Qin said he had "no idea" whether the G-8 had invited the Chinese Finance Minister to its upcoming meeting in Japan. Any

invitation would be given "serious consideration." China has been active in strengthening its cooperation with the G-8, said Qin.

Taiwan Talks

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¶13. Asked about Chen Yunlin's comments on restarting talks with Taiwan, Qin said that as the Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, he could not address this issue.

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